

Oakwatch: The Oakland Code Enforcement Project Meeting
Minutes
April 17, 2019

Meeting Attendees

Present: Millie Sass, David Manthei, Elena Zaitsoff, Michael Medwed, Trisha Margiotti, Nicole Cochran, Martell Covington, Gwen Bolder, Bithe Runsdorf, Bob Charland, Guy Johnson, Mark Oleniacz, Sally Stadelman, Leah Friedman, Lizabeth Gray, Commander Daniel Herrmann, Officers Ronald Griffin & David Shifren, Teresa Bradley

Call to Order, Introductions

EZaitsoff read the mission statement and reviewed the ground rules for the meeting. Introductions continued around the room.

Featured Speaker | Teresa Bradley | Recycling Supervisor, Department of Public Works (DPW)

TBradley introduced herself and talked about her extensive experience in zero waste coordination. She recognizes there has been a lack of successful outreach to community members and businesses about recycling expectations. Her main focus is to develop better communication, starting with updated signs at drop-off centers that clearly illustrate accepted items and mailing 15,000 post cards to commercial businesses outlining recycling requirements.

TBradley recognized Councilperson Strassburger's office for leading amendments to city's refuse and recycling code. The legislation is a more concise document that clearly states accepted materials, procedures for residential homes and rental units (apartments with 5+ units must contract an independent recycling service), and emphasizes that recycling is mandatory in the city.

The Bureau of Environmental Services distributed a [newsletter and refuse calendar](#) that notes changes to accepted materials and provides other relevant information. The city no longer relies on a numbers system for recyclable materials; glass bottles/jars, plastic containers under three gallons (bottles, jugs, and tubs), and aluminum (soup, soda, etc.) cans are accepted.

The city has signed a three-year agreement with an e-waste vendor to collect items including TVs and household chemical waste. The vendor is planned to be onsite at 3001 Railroad Street (office of the Bureau of Environmental Services) twice a week: Wednesdays from 3:00-8:00 p.m. and Sundays from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. A fee of approximately 40 cents/pound will be charged. Elderly residents can make arrangements for at home pickup. This information will also be noted in future mailers and communications. TBradley has also already scheduled the vendor to host eight additional collection events to gather waste collected by summer clean-up events.

Q: What will the blue recycling trucks take?

A: We cannot require everyone to have blue bins. Our workers will still accept recycling in blue bags, but we prefer to collect loose recycling stored in blue bins. Our department has approx. \$300,000 to spend over two years, so we need to create a plan.

LGray gave a brief explanation of community [Totter bin sale](#) open to the public until May 15.

Commander Herrmann and Officer Shifren | Pittsburgh Police Zone 4

Officer Shifren presented crime report for periods March 1-March 20 and March 21-April 17:

Aggravated assault 0-1

Burglaries 5-8

Stolen vehicle 0-2

Theft from auto 2-1

Theft from business 2-5

Theft from person 7-7

Theft from resident 2-6

Theft by deception 3-1

Total 25-34

Be accountable for your belongings and make sure your doors and windows are locked.

Citations:

Public intoxication 3

Underage drinking 4

Open container 3

Disorderly conduct 2

Unreasonable noise 3

Public urination 1

Possession 1

Total 17

Contact Officer Shifren at david.shifren@pittsburghpa.gov to receive a weekly crime report snapshot for Zone 4.

Commander Hermann mentioned Zone 4 officers recently attended The Big Table Pittsburgh meeting which helps bring the larger Pittsburgh business community together. Business leaders get together to coordinate community gatherings in neighborhoods across the city.

Q: Can officer keep an eye on the Semple Street business district? Many people complain about the Panther Bar and Bootleggers. Both bars keep their windows open late into the night and it is loud.

A: There is a nuisance bar task force. 311 complaints help us identify those nuisance bars. We've been able to manage a few bars, including Chiefs in North Oakland.

Q: It looks like an area between McKee Place and Semple Street is a hot spot for parties.

A: Pitt Police and city police are aware and have tracked down house responsible.

Q: Is there a way to radar underground musical festival? Seems to be hosted by students, but clearly not affiliated with the University. Live music takes place in basement of rental units. Some people charge at the door. Lots of safety concerns.

A: Pitt/city police have not had any reported problems related to this.

Officer Guy Johnson | University of Pittsburgh Police

Officer Guy Johnson presented the crime report for March:

55 reported incidents – 8 arrests – 19 citations

1 criminal mischief citation

1 criminal trespass arrest

1 defiant trespass citation

3 DUIs

2 panhandling warnings

4 simple assault arrests

4 underage drinking citations

13 conduct referrals

4 party shutdowns

The semester is winding down. Students move out April 25th. Pitt has increased impact due to warmer weather.

The reported incident of a female student chased by male suspects in Oakland was discovered to be motivated by a scavenger hunt. The male suspects were students from Denison University and were tasked with “scaring someone”. Pitt Police identified the suspects and they have been referred back to Denison for a conduct review.

There have also been reported incidents of suspicious people claiming to be from a utility company and asking to be let into homes. Pitt Police did knock-and-talks to inform residents/renters and called landlords.

Bob Charland | Office of Council President Bruce Kraus

Paving list was sent out by DOMI. Council President Kraus’s district only receives 4.5 miles of paving and they need to make sure the work is spread out evenly. In past years, DOMI has only distributed paving lists for one year at a time. This year, they sent out a three-year plan for paving.

No new updates on rental registration to report.

Q: What is the status with repairing Swinburne Road?

A: The original plan was supposed to be completed by now, but the hillside slid more, so they are working on a new strategy for repair/safety.

Q: Does the city still take calls for abandoned TVs?

A: Yes, and tires. Because there is a charge to recycle tires, people offer to charge a lower price to hide the tires instead of recycling them. They end up piling up. Tires are a health hazard in many ways.

Nicole Cochran | Office of Councilperson Strassburger, District 8

Office is working with Environmental Services on outreach plan for waste and recycling regulations. Plan should be outlined by end of summer, and communication will begin rolling out in the next few months.

Leah Friedman | Office of the Mayor

Star gazing in the city parks. See event dates here: [Star Parties](#)

Summer [Learn and Earn](#) applications are now open for youth ages 14-21 interested in a paid summer internship. Applications will be accepted until May 31st. Organizations interested in hosting a participant can apply through the website as well.

The Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF) is hosted a [Housing Celebration and Resource Fair](#) on **April 30 from 5:30-7:30 at 412 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219**. Great opportunity for residents to meet with HOF and URA Housing staff, along with 15+ local housing organizations, to learn more about programs and services for tenants and homeowners in Pittsburgh.

Gwendolyn Bolden | Director of On-Street and Metered Parking

Total number of non-metered parking spaces in all Oakland parking zones: 3,684

Residential Parking Permits in Oakland: 3,480

Visitor passes requested: 2,252

Number of variances requested in March: 99

2019 March – Daytime Enforcement

Zone	Current RPPs	VPs issued in March	Variances Issued in March	Number of spaces from Planning's parking studies
B	333	254	8	452
C	269	170	13	401
D	1700	949	24	1830
E	447	408	25	321
FF	50	31	9	NA
M	638	360	20	602
Q	43	80	0	78
Grand Total	3480	2252	99	3684

Sally Stadelman | Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections

Coming soon this spring and summer, you can apply for a license and permit online at:

<http://pittsburghpa.gov/onestoppgh/>

Q: Problem property 3538 Frazier Street does not appear to be listed on Building Eye anymore.

A: The property was abated. The property owners plan to get permits to build a house.

Q: When was it abated? There is still trash and standing water on property. Still looks dangerous.

A: SStadelman will follow up with inspector to make sure everything was clear.

Jamie Ducar | University of Pittsburgh, Community and Government Relations

Pitt hosted an Institutional Master Plan meeting focused on transportation and mobility on April 16. A few more meetings will be scheduled in May before the plan is reviewed by the city (sometime in June). Everything discussed at meetings is published online: <https://www.campusplan.pitt.edu/>. Hard-copy binders will also be made available at various locations.

Pitt has been approved to move ahead with Bigelow Blvd redesign. The project should be completed August 2020 before students arrive. Redesign of the driveway in front of William Pitt Union will begin in spring semester.

The new Pitt Start program, Panther Connect, will include groups of around 300 students spending a weekend on campus learning about the city, the university and service. Students groups will begin arriving the last weekend of June until the beginning of August.

Meeting Adjourned

The next meeting is **Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the Oakland Career Center**. The featured speaker will be Gwendolyn Bolden from the Pittsburgh Parking Authority.